

**Title:** A Sober Warning and a Poor Widow - Part 2

**Passage:** Mark 12:38-44

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And in his teaching he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

Context of Passage:

Jesus gave a Sober Warning (v.38-40):

- Beware of pride, greed, and hypocrisy

## EXPOSITION

### The Viewing

#### Mark 12:40

***And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums.***

*He sat down*

- Jesus had been talking and teaching for a long time.

*The treasury*

- located in the "Court of the Women", which was open to all
- trumpet-shaped receptacle

*Putting money into the offering box*

- because money was physical metal coins, then offerings would make sounds in proportion to the size of their giving
- If people gave a lot, it would make a loud noise.
- Many religious leaders made public spectacles of their giving.

Isaiah 29:13a

And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me"

Matthew 6:2

Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

*Watched the people*

- place where people were seen (and also heard as dropped in physical coins)
- Jesus also observed people

## ***A. Jesus saw the crowds***

### Matthew 9:36-38

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Jesus saw individuals as well

### John 2:25

and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

### Mark 5:30

And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?"

- Jesus saw the woman needing healing

### Luke 19:3-5

And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today."

- Jesus saw Zacchaeus

*Application:* Have peace and comfort to know that God knows you individually as well.

### Psalms 139:1-3

O LORD, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.

## ***B. Jesus saw and weighed motives***

### 1 Samuel 2:3

Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by his actions are weighed.

*Many rich people put in large sums.*

- Note: this is not a criticism against being rich
- Condition of the heart (not the amount of money) is the focus.
- Being wealthy presents risks but is not sinful itself

### Luke 18:22-23

When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.

- Jesus was sad at his heart (not the fact that he was rich)

### 1 Timothy 6:17

As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

Passage Contrasts

- Danger of false religion of the scribes vs.

- Devotion of the true faith of the widow

## The Giving

### **Mark 12:42**

***And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny.***

*A poor widow*

- the poorest of the poor
- Unknown as to how she became poor (was it because the scribes had “devoured her house” as referenced just a few verses before?)

Widows - special place in God’s heart

### **James 1:27**

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

### **Psalms 34:18**

The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

*two small copper coins, which make a penny*

- Penny = 1/64th of a denarius (a day’s wage of a common laborer)
- Virtually worthless in material terms

## The Accounting

### **Mark 12:43-44**

***And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”***

*And he called his disciples to him*

- Widow may have been ashamed of the size of her offering
- But Jesus saw her heart and the personal significance of her offering.

### **Psalms 51:16-17**

For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

*Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box.*

- God’s accounting of the widow’s offering.

*For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.*

- God’s accounting focuses on the heart (not the amount of money)
- Giving out of surplus/without cost vs. giving sacrificially.
- What does Jesus value most? The heart of the giver.

## Contrasts in Passage

- Religious leaders (prideful and greedy) vs. widow (humility)
- Giving out of surplus vs. giving out of sacrifice

## Application: Money

- Jesus taught of money more than any other subject
- Why? Because of its reflection of the heart

## Matthew 6:21

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- Three categories of people who hear about the Bible on money
  - People who love to hear
  - People who can't stand it
  - People who have never heard

## Psalms 50:10-11

For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine.

- God doesn't need any of your money. God created and owns all.

## Key Principles

- Give willingly
- Give thankfully
- Give joyfully
- Give sacrificially

## 2 Corinthians 8:8-9, 13-14

I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich...For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness.

## 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, 10-11

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver....He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

- God is not into any pressure giving. Do not give under compulsion.

## 1 Chronicles 29:9

Then the people rejoiced because they had given willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered freely to the LORD. David the king also rejoiced greatly.

## Matthew 25:37-40

Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick

or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

*all she had to live on*

- Live = offering reflected all of her being

Matthew 16:24-27

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.